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WAR

As reflected in legends and the accounts of missionaries, there was constant rivalry between the tribes, particularly between those of the eastern and western parts of the island. Wars were frequent and arose from the merest trifles, the principal causes being personal revenge, jealousy, greediness, and want (194, p. 360). Thomson (215, p. 476) states very pertinently that their "traditions are filled with accounts of sanguinary conflicts originating from trivial causes and continued through generations, until one party or the other were entirely exterminated." Disputes over the name of a night of the moon or a breach in etiquette might lead to war (81, vol. 38, p. 136). Generally words and blows were exchanged but people were not actually killed. The first act of war was to burn the hut of one's opponent. However even this did not always provoke war. The importance of the *matatoa* (warriors) in social organization shows the significance of war in the daily life of the island (p. 138).

Various games, principally spear and stone throwing, trained the children and the young men for war. If we may rely on Thomson (215, p. 476) these were the favorite amusements at feasts, even for grown men. A very popular legend, recorded by Roussel (190, p. 426) in 1867, and still well known, tells how young men had mock fights with spears with a blade made of calabash shell: "He hakamaa i te taua pahera" (They were learning the fight of the spears terminating in a calabash shell).

In the recently published manuscript of Father Roussel (190, p. 423) there is a very detailed and interesting account of warfare:

> When war was declared, all those who intended to take part in it smeared themselves with black and spent a sleepless night. They were busy preparing their weapons and hiding their most precious belongings. [There is no hint of human sacrifice or other offerings to the gods to procure favor.]
>
> Before daybreak the warriors set out, followed by their wives and children who accompanied them with protective chants and moans. The women and the children went to the hills nearest the battlefield to witness the victory or defeat of their husbands or fathers.
>
> As soon as their adversaries heard of the expedition they lay in ambush awaiting an opportunity to begin the fight. If they did not feel strong enough, they stayed at home and abandoned themselves to the victors who immediately started to burn and loot. Everything became prey of the flames—huts, sugar cane, and so forth. When all was burnt and looted, the vanquished were carried away indiscriminately, men, women and children, to a place chosen beforehand. On their way they satisfied their private grievances, striking the captives with cudgels was the mildest treatment. Some were buried alive and put into the oven when they died. Some were cut into pieces with an axe or trodden under the feet until their intestines burst forth. Others were burnt gradually until they died. All the cruel devices pagan barbary could invent were put to work against defenseless victims of all ages, sex and status.

A few more details, apparently authentic, are added by Thomson (215, p. 476):

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726 727 The clans were always led to battle by the chief, but there was no particular formation. Every man acted in accordance with his individual fancy, or as occasion demanded, relying upon skill and strength. . . . The slaughter on the field of battle was never very great, but in the event of a general defeat, the vanquished party was pursued by the victors to the hiding places, their habitations destroyed, females captured, children and infirm persons brutally murdered. The defenseless unfortunates who fell victims to their merciless captors, accepted their fate, whether it was slavery, torture, or butchery, with remarkable fortitude, seldom if ever making any show of resistance.

These wars between tribes or lineages are always presented in legends according to the same pattern:

The western tribes attacked the eastern or vice versa. When one party felt that it was overwhelmed and that victory (*ao*) was with their adversaries, the warriors fled and tried to take refuge in caves (*he opo ki roto ki te ana, he pipiko*) or on the rocks or islets off the coast. The old men, the women, and the children scattered and hid in caves or in deserted places. Those who had a powerful relative among the victors put themselves under his protection. These refugees were called *pakiroki*.

727 The victorious warriors promptly invaded enemy territory, looking for the hidden people. Those who were discovered were slaughtered or taken as slaves. Sometimes the women and girls were spared and given as wives to young unmarried warriors (87, p. 31). Guards were set on the coast to prevent refugees on the islets from renewing their attacks or from getting food. They had to live on seaweed (*auke*) and on fish. Most fortunate were those who could find *poporo* berries (*Solanum nigrum*).

[266 578] If among the dead enemies there was a man of high rank, the victors not only ate him, but burned his skull. This was considered the greatest of insults.

721 War for the modern Easter Islanders belongs to a far distant past and they know no more about it than is contained in the legends. (See pp. 363-389.) The fights with visiting Europeans were so brief that no observations of ethnological value could be made. Little material on warfare is given in missionary accounts, though a series of wars broke out in 1863 and 1864, provoked by disputes over land belonging to natives kidnapped by the Peruvians (p. 43). Zumbohm (230, vol. 5, p. 663) says: "When the crops were to be distributed there arose quarrels which degenerated into wars, the consequences of which were looting, devastation and famine." These wars were stopped by the missionaries but were renewed under the influence of Dutroux-Bornier (p. 45).

CANNIBALISM

266 Victoria Rapahango told me that when she was a small girl she had known the last *kai-tangata* (cannibal) of the island. All the children were much afraid of him. No native on the island denied that his ancestors were cannibals. Some laughed at it; others resented any allusion to such a savage custom. Most of the islanders lost their self-consciousness about cannibalism after hearing of some instances of it in Europe. Roussel (190, p. 463) writes that cannibalism was abandoned only after the introduction of Christianity. Before that natives had eaten some white men, including two Peruvian slavers. Cannibalistic meals were eaten by warriors in a secluded spot, and women and

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411 used both as a spear and as a javelin. A site is pointed out near Anakena, where a man throwing down hill killed another at about thirty-five yards. The art of making these mataa is, of course, practically extinct, but one old man, commonly known as "Hé" (fig. 83) brought us some which he had manufactured himself for the Expedition, and which were fairly well wrought.

622 With the exception of the Miru, of which more will be said, there were no chiefs nor any form of government; any man who was expert in war became a leader. The warfare consisted largely of spasmodic and isolated raids; an aggrieved person gathered together his neighbours and descended on the offenders.

726 It is related incidentally that one man, going along the south coast, "found war going on," one set of men having blocked up another in a cave. Another story is told of six men, called Gwaruti-mata-keva, of the clan Tupahotu, who lived in a cave in a certain hillock on the south coast, known as Toa-toa. They went round in a boat to Hanga Piko, stole fish, and returned rapidly to their cave. A hundred men from Hanga Piko then came overland to punish the robbery, and made a fire of grass before the cave in which the men lay hidden. When the attackers assumed that the enemy were all dead from suffocation, they went into the cave; but those within had buried their faces in holes scraped in the earth, and when the men from Hanga Piko entered, they arose and slew the whole hundred.

575 A more interesting fact came out incidentally in connection with this gang of Toa-toa, connecting them with the secret societies found elsewhere in the Pacific. They were, it was said, in the habit of going about after dark with their faces painted red, white, and black, and visiting houses, where they declared they were gods, and demanded food, which the inhabitants accordingly gave them. The fraud, however, finally came to light when one day a man, who was travelling with his servant, saw them washing paint off their faces, "so they knew that they had deceived the people, and the people gathered together and killed them."

727 In these internecine fights fire was very generally set to the enemy's dwellings. ("He often burnt houses," a young man said, pointing to an older one, and the impeachment was not denied.) The ahu, too, were raided and bodies burnt, which [764] seems to be the cause of the burnt bones recorded by certain travellers; there is no reason to suppose there was cremation or sacrifice on Easter Island.